

**Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC)**

**VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT (VOCA)
VOCA CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE GRANTS
CFDA 16.575**

**Request for Proposals (RFP) Questions and Answers
Revised 3/31/2016**

Acronym definitions:

CA: Child Abuse

CAC: Children's Advocacy Center

CCR: Central Contractor Registry

CPS: Child Protective Services

DV: Domestic Violence

FTE: Full Time Equivalency

MCEDSV: Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence

NCA: National Children's Alliance

OVC: Office for Victims of Crime

PPO: Personal Protection Order

PT: Part Time

SA: Sexual Assault

SAFE: Sexual Assault Forensic Examination

SAM: System for Award Management

SANE: Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner

SART: Sexual Assault Response Team

1. Which agencies who provide services in Wayne County should also check the "Out Wayne" box?

Answer: Check all boxes which apply to your proposal. If your proposal is to provide service in "Out Wayne" then check only that box and not Wayne County.

2. An unmet need of the victims of sexual assault we serve is obtaining post exposure HIV prophylaxis medication. These medications need to be started within 72 hours of the sexual assault and helps to reduce the psychological effects of the possibility of being exposed to HIV. The need is currently unmet because the medications are costly and require pre-authorizations from health insurances. Often the cost of the copay for a start-up pack is too expensive for the victim and reimbursement from Crime Victim Compensation takes too long.

Obtaining a pre-authorization to help the victim receive the medication and then finding a pharmacy that carries the medication has been another barrier. Per the National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations, it is recommended that SANE Programs have on hand 5-7 day starter packs available for victims of sexual assault. This starter pack of medication allows time for the victim and advocate working with the victim to procure the full prescription. The cost of these starter packs is not covered by our SANE grant or any other funding the agency receives. Is this an allowable expense?

Answer: Medication is not an allowable expense under this grant.

3. Will the SANE nurses be reimbursed as well as physicians for the medical exams?

Answer: Medical exams are not allowable for reimbursement under this grant. Questions regarding provider reimbursement for forensic medical examinations should be referred to the Commission's SAFE Response program.

4. We are being requested to provide forensic interviews in Counties other than our own and are not currently covered by a CAC. Could we add dollars to our proposal to cover the cost of staff, furniture needed for interviews and travel, for example?

Answer: The proposal should include only those counties which are covered by your NCA accreditation and are not in the developing phase. If a grant is awarded and you are successful in implementing the accredited services then future requests may include additional coverage areas as they become accredited.

5. We will be submitting a request for our CAC to be funded. I would like to submit a request to cover the cost of having a voice for children who are in the system due to abuse and neglect and would work directly with the children to represent their best interest.

- a) Should we present a separate proposal for this service?

- b) If we do, will it hurt our request for the CAC services as they have been funded (plus expansion)?

Answer: An applicant organization may only submit one VOCA Grant proposal. VOCA Grant funds may only be used to provide direct services to child victims of physical and sexual abuse, criminal neglect, and abandonment. Grant activities which provide support only to these victims will be considered. Court Appointed Special Advocate programs are not a funding priority for this grant program in the upcoming Fiscal Year.

The applicant is encouraged to submit a grant proposal which is justified, allowable, and falls within the scope of the VOCA Grant program and reflects community need.

6. On the Request for Proposal Policy, section 1, #1 Funding Availability. It states that there is \$35 million available in VOCA grant funds for the period Oct 1, 2016-Sept 30, 2017. Then, it says applicants selected for funding will be funded for a three-year grant term. When we complete the application budget, should the amounts entered reflect the one year period (10/1/16—9/30/17) or a 3-year period?

Answer: The proposal budget should reflect 1 year (12 months) of grant activities for the FY 10/1/2016-9/30/2017.

7. On the Facesheet, question 2, part g. “indicate which type of victims will be served by the VOCA project,” do we select all types of victimizations the program will serve (if a victim seeks services), or only the types of victims the program typically serves? For example, we typically serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, but we occasionally have other types of victims seeking services. What happens if we select “robbery” and no robbery victims seek services during the grant period? What happens if we don’t select “robbery” and a robbery victim needs services?

Answer: The proposal should focus on what the core services provided by the proposed positions. You can report on those services to other victim types in the VOCA Quarterly Reporting but your proposal should only address the services that the position will be performing on a regular basis.

8. Will the new match amount of \$22.96 per hour for volunteers now require us to pay the VOCA staff the same amount per hour?

Answer: No.

9. Can volunteer time be used for match if the event is a CAC fundraiser/awareness event?

Answer: No. Organized fund raising includes all efforts to obtain funds to cover capital or operating costs, or to solicit in kind contributions. The test is the purpose of the event, not the amount of funds raised. Examples include: Planning, organizing, coordinating events to raise funds; conducting a financial campaign or endowment drive; soliciting specific gifts or bequests; applying for grants; and applying for support from local community foundations, such as United Way. Project staff cannot avoid the limitation on organized fund raising by donating “off duty” time.

10. Are gas cards (to be given to victim's families for medical appt. out of town) an allowable expense under transportation needs?

Answer: No.

11. Would the Shelter allowable expenses include:

- a) Shelter staffing?
- b) Occupancy?
- c) Shelter supplies, such as food and personal care products for residential clients?
- d) Children's Program services in Shelter?

Answer: Staff located in the shelter and Children's program services may be requested. However, the proposal must present strong justification and documentation that these costs are not supported by other funding sources.

Occupancy and food and personal care items for residential clients are not allowable.

12. If services are provided to sexual assault survivors (i.e. group or individual) who are currently incarcerated - is that allowable? Meaning, they are incarcerated for an offense, but identify as a SA survivor and the only services being provided are related only to that of the SA in the form of counseling.

Answer: Services to incarcerated individuals, even if it pertains to a victimization, are not allowable under the current VOCA Guidelines.

13. If there are costs involved in needing to modify space in order to accommodate VOCA staff and provide direct services to victims - would that be allowable? (i.e. construction necessary to add office space for counseling)

Answer: No.

14. Our Child Advocacy Center is currently NCA accredited to serve two counties, from our stand-alone location. The agency was developed, however, with the long term goal to outfit a mobile unit to serve underserved populations in several counties by using a mobile unit.

Answer: The proposal should include only those counties which are covered by your NCA accreditation and are not in the developing phase. If a grant is awarded and you are successful in implementing the accredited services, then future requests may include additional coverage areas as they become accredited.

15. If our current Forensic Interviewer was a former CPS worker in her previous job, is this something that needs to be detailed in "State of Michigan Involvement" section?

Answer: Yes.

16. If our CAC is being asked to serve a neighboring County and working on a protocol at this time as well as a location for interviews, would VOCA pay for these interviews?

Answer: The proposal should include only those counties which are covered by your NCA

accreditation and are not in the developing phase. If a grant is awarded and you are successful in implementing the accredited services, then future requests may include additional coverage areas as they become accredited.

17. Which E-Grams role will receive the notification of funding award be sent to?

Answer: Authorizing Official.

18. Can we request more than one email address from our organization?

Answer: Each User Profile should have individual email addresses belonging to that particular user.

19. For match, can we use cash match from:

- a. County funds?
- b. United Way?
- c. Store Revenue?
- d. Foundation Grants?

Answer: Items included in the budget must be allowable. For example, a counselor is funded by any of the funding sources listed in a-d above as long as the funds (county funds, United Way, Store Revenue, and Foundation Grants) are non-federal funds.

20. If we have received notification that a current grant will not be extended into the next fiscal year, can we fund the position in the VOCA grant as a new position?

Answer: In order for CVSC to fully consider your proposal documentation of the funding, denial would be required and can be uploaded along with the position description and resume. The position is not “new,” it is an existing position not previously funded by the VOCA grant.

21. Pg. 9 under “Program Specific Requirements” – item #6 calls to Adopt Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors. There is a tight timeframe with regard to utilizing this new model in our Policy Manual and getting Board approval. How do we show compliance?

- a. Does a change to the new model need to be completed before our application is submitted? Or
- b. Can we create a memo regarding how our policies comply?

Answer: CVSC will provide instruction to successful applicants awarded funding for the upcoming fiscal year on how to document compliance with this requirement. We recognize that such requirements require agency Board approval and policy changes.

22. Pg. 12, letter c “Direct Services” mentions civil justice systems assistance. Attachment V, Section II expands this as “family law, custody, visitation, support.” Might we include divorce?

Answer: No. Divorce, tort actions, and/or civil restitution efforts are not allowable direct services under this grant.

23. Under “f. Purpose of the VOCA Grant” one choice is “Continue a VOCA-funded victim services project funded in a previous year” while another is “Expand or enhance an existing project not funded by VOCA in the previous year”. What is the appropriate choice for expanding/enhancing a program which was previously funded by VOCA?

Answer: Choose the response most applicable to your project.

24. A portion of our Executive Director’s salary is included as part of our indirect costs. Does this exclude her from being our Authorized Official?

Answer: No.

25. Where would we write in a contracted medical assistant position into the grant?

Answer: This position is not an allowable cost under the VOCA grant.

26. The Indian Nations Conference is going to take place in December 2016 in Palm Springs, CA. Would you allow this line item in travel for Tribal programming?

Answer: Yes. The budget request and narrative should document your agency’s request to attend this conference. This is only applicable for Tribal sub-recipients. If approved in the award no further approval would be required for this out of state request.

27. Can we use our Medical Director/Physician for our forensic medical exams as Cash match? She is backed up by a SANE nurse who is also contracted. All are non-Federally funded.

Answer: No. If this position is included in the agency’s indirect cost then it may be used as match.

28. Can we use our physician/medical director and our medical coordinator as part of our cash match in our new application if they are not being funded by another Federal source?

Answer: No. If this position is included in the agency’s indirect cost then it may be used as match.

29. In order for VOCA to provide funding for our SANE Unit, the SANE Unit must be operational for at least two years. Is this still correct?

Answer: This has never been a requirement of the CVSC. This RFP has identified that specifically services and supports for sexual assault victims using the SANE/SART model is a funding priority.

30. Can you explain “multiple victim types may be served under one VOCA grant”?

Answer: Applicants may seek funding to provide services to more than one victim type. For example, if the staff are funded to provide services to victims of child sexual abuse and adult sexual assault then only check those two victim categories. The proposal and budget should display a clear link between the specific project activities and victims to be served and the proposed budget items. If other victim types are served during the grant year by the VOCA staff then reporting of the victims served and types of services is required.

31. If grantees are able to apply for SANE Unit funding would the grant that we have already had and are re-applying for? As in, if it's new funding for a new program, that would NOT go into a separate VOCA grant?

Answer: The RFP released is a competitive grant. The CVSC will accept only one application per applicant agency. This RFP is specifically seeking to fund services which provide support services to victims of domestic violence, child abuse, underserved victims and sexual assault victim services using the SANE/SART model. For sexual assault victims, forensic exams are allowable costs only to the extent that other funding sources (such as state compensation or private insurance or public benefits) are unavailable or insufficient and, such exams conform to state evidentiary collection requirements.

32. Can we use VOCA funds for training non-VOCA staff as well as VOCA funded staff as long as they are providing VOCA eligible direct services?

Answer: Training of other staff of your organization may be allowed but must be requested, documented and supported in the proposal.

33. Can VOCA fund a PT Interviewer and has other roles at the CAC?

Answer: VOCA funding may be used by agencies to support direct services to victims of crime. If the activities of the “other roles” are ineligible then the position may not be supported at 100%. Only direct service costs may be supported with VOCA grant funds. Applicants are cautioned when seeking support for part time positions that documentation of all activities charged to the grant (and other sources) is required and is subject to audit.

34. How many positions is VOCA willing to fund at CAC's?

Answer: There is no limit for any applicant. The proposal must provide significant justification for the staff requested in the grant. The number of positions requested are usually based upon the activities proposed and the needs within your communities.

35. Can we use the cost of providing Interpreter Services to victims as part of Cash Match?

Answer: Yes, as long as the funding source for the Interpreter Service is either donated or paid position and are not supported by federal funds.

36. Will VOCA fund partial FTE's?

Answer: Yes. The agency must maintain Time and Effort report documentation of the activities performed under the grant.

37. Will there be Match Waivers available.

Answer: Providing match is an eligibility criteria for this grant. Applicants must evaluate their eligibility if they are unable to commit to the required match level. A Match Waiver may only be allowed if there are significant barriers. A request for match waiver must be approved by CVSC. In addition, CVSC is then required to seek approval from the federal program office prior to approving an award which includes a match waiver.

38. Sub-contracting of required service is not allowed, however, what if you're participating in order to coordinate services and fill existing gaps?

Answer: Such a request should be documented in the proposal and a strong justification must be presented. However, "sub-contracting" with existing VOCA grantees is unnecessary as each grant proposal should reflect such "coordinated" services.

39. Will VOCA pay for stipends for staff on-call to respond to hospitals and police departments?

Answer: No.

40. Is continuation funding possible or likely?

Answer: Yes but is subject to the availability of federal funds.

41. How do we allocate for types of services if most of our services are provided to DV and CA/SA but we also will provide to all victims of any type of crime?

Answer: The proposal should focus on what the core services provided by the proposed positions. You can report on those services to other victim types in the VOCA Quarterly Reporting but your proposal should only address the services that the position will be performing on a regular basis.

42. Is it allowable to payout an employee who has resigned their unused sick/vacation time under VOCA?

Answer: If a grant-funded employee resigns from a position prior to the end of the grant year, only accrued vacation and sick time will be reimbursed. This reimbursement is only allowable

within the period of the grant – and requires prior approval from CVSC and OVC. Notify CVSC when a staff person is making use of this policy at the time that the Agreement Amendment Request form is submitted. This is covered in the VOCA policies and procedures document.

43. What if we are unsure if we will be able to meet our required Match using our Volunteer hours or Cash match considering that the potential award amounts may be larger?

Answer: Applicants must be able to support the proposal by providing the required match amount in the proposal in the budget. Applicants are now able to utilize the \$22.96/hr. rate for their Volunteers plus FICA.

44. Can the Volunteer rate of \$22.96/hr. be higher than the lowest paid VOCA and/or Match position?

Answer: Yes.

45. Is the policy of Emergency Financial Assistance required to be included in the grant application? If so, where is it uploaded?

Answer: The Policy of Emergency Financial Assistance is not required to be uploaded to the application, however, if your agency is awarded, all agencies will receive Desk Audit and/or Site Visit, at which time the reviewer may request to review the agency's Policy for Emergency Financial Assistance.

46. If I can include administrative salaries to Indirect Costs, may I then add a portion of salary that is attached to a person with an assigned role in the grant (i.e. Financial Director, Project Director or Executive Director)?

Answer: Costs may not be charged both as a direct cost and an indirect cost. The development of indirect costs at the agency level is governed by the federal grant requirements under 2 CFR Part 200.

47. Do I understand correctly that there will be no allocation amount this year?

Answer: Yes. It is a competitive application, which means that all applications including current grantees that are submitted will be reviewed on a competitive basis.

48. Should Audit costs be prorated?

Answer: Only the cost for a Single Audit (does not apply to Financial Audit Statements) may be included in the proposal and must be prorated based upon the VOCA percentage of the agency's total Federal funding multiplied by the costs of the Single Audit.

49. Can we use VOCA funding and funding from another source to make a full time position?

Answer: Yes. Documentation of the costs charged to the VOCA grant must be available and will be audited.

50. Will there be a new Acceptable Activity Outcomes and Outcome Measures specific to Forensic Interviews at CAC's?

Answer: Use the existing CAC outcome measures for the purposes of this proposal. We will review this matter and determine if further updates to the outcomes are required.

51. Is the Tribal Match still 5%?

Answer: Yes.

52. Is the service fee of law enforcement for a PPO an allowable cost?

Answer: No.

53. Can we distinguish between administrative Volunteers rated below the lowest paid employee and Clinical interns rated higher than admin employees but lower than Therapists?

Answer: Yes, however, administrative Volunteers have to be performing activities related to the grant such as gathering victim satisfaction surveys or completing reports on this grant or other direct service activities allowed by VOCA. Applicants can use a standard \$22.96 volunteer rate or a variable rate determined by the agency's salary schedule.

54. If an agency has a Financial Audit but does not meet the threshold of \$750,000 in federal expenditures can that cost be included in the Indirect Costs?

Answer: No.

55. For medical forensics services, would a Director position be able to be supported if they are providing direct services?

Answer: No.

56. If CAC does not have enough staff to fill all 3 roles required in the grant (i.e. Project Director, etc.), is it appropriate to use Board Members?

Answer: Yes.

57. If you are a developing CAC and do currently provide forensic interviews of children, is the forensic interviewer expense allowable? How about the advocate expense?

Answer: The forensic interviewer and advocate positions are allowable under the VOCA grant.

However, only accredited CAC are eligible to apply for funding.

58. Will we be provided with the score sheet that we will be scored on?

Answer: The score sheet is included in the RFP (Request for Proposal).

59. Do existing agencies have to re-assign all of their users?

Answer: Yes. Please refer to the Crime Victims Agreement MI E-Grants Grantee Training manual.

60. Will you want copies of MOU of coordinated services as an attachment?

Answer: They can be included with the letters of support but are not required. These documents will be reviewed during the on-site visit.

61. We have a separate Salary schedule and Salaries are not included in our Job Descriptions. Do we have to modify our Job Descriptions to include the Salary?

Answer: Yes.

62. Are the Application Webcast presentations available in E-Grams?

Answer: Yes. The PowerPoint presentations used in the webinars can be accessed in the Show Documents of the application.

63. Can agencies who have previously had permission on Outcome Measurements that are not a part of the pre-approved lists, still use those?

Answer: Yes.

64. Page 14 of the RFP references the allowable expense of “time necessary to complete the required VOCA performance reports and expenditure reports”. Would this make a prorated amount an allowable expense to support the wage/fringe costs of a victim services program Manager position?

Answer: Yes, if the position is involved in the reporting of grant related activities. The agency must maintain Time and Effort report documentation of the activities performed under the grant.

65. Does VOCA grant fund the Project Director, Authorized Official, or the financial person’s salaries if they are staff with multiple roles (i.e. Our Intake persons is also the financial person)?

Answer: Authorized Official and Financial Officers are not roles that VOCA will fund.

However, if a portion of the Project or Financial Director's time devoted to the project is covered by the agency's Indirect cost rate then it may be included in the proposal.

66. Are Travel costs associated with bringing a child victim to a CAC for a forensic interview allowable for victim services staff?

Answer: Yes.

67. Are Travel costs associated for the child/family allowable (i.e. Hotel per diem, etc. near CAC is 3+ hours one way)?

Answer: Yes.

68. Is the purchase of coffee/creamers/sugar for a victim services waiting area in the office an allowable expense?

Answer: No. Food is not allowed under the federal grants from the Department of Justice.

69. Are Travel costs associated with attending a court hearing allowable for victim services staff and for the victim?

Answer: Yes.

70. If our application is approved for the FY 2016-2017, will we be able to add wage/fringe costs for additional staff or the FY 2017-2018?

Answer: Yes if funds are available and if additional funding is warranted.

71. If your application was denied funding in this FY 2016-2017, would we be able to apply for FY 2017-2018 funds?

Answer: At this time, it is not known if a competitive application will be posted or if additional funds will be available to expand services.

72. Page 10 of the VOCA Policies and Procedures Manual indicates that it is unallowable to pay for training expenses and travel related expenses of management and administrative training for Executive Directors, Board Members, and other individuals who do not provide direct services. For example, does this mean that VOCA will not pay for a Victim Services Manager to attend an MCEDSV training?

Answer: VOCA funds will not support training expenses and travel related expenses if the position is not providing direct services and is not a VOCA funded position and/or Match position.

73. For new programs, what percentage of funding has to come from non-federal sources?

Answer: At least 25-50 percent.

74. Please explain a “volunteer waiver”.

Answer: An applicant can request that the requirement to utilize volunteers is waived. Sufficient justification for such a request is needed. The Commission policy is that volunteer waivers will be approved rarely if at all. The requirement to utilize volunteers is a grant requirement.

75. Is there a ratio or number requirement for volunteers?

Answer: No.

76. Do volunteers need to have direct interaction with victims?

Answer: No, but volunteers can only be used as match if they provide direct service activities related to the grant.

77. Is there a floor, ceiling or expected range of grant awards?

Answer: Minimum grant award is \$50,000 and no maximum has been set. This information was included in the RFP.

78. Do matching funds need to be collected before October 1st?

Answer: No. The use of matching funds must occur during the project period of 10/1/2016 – 9/30/2017.

79. Please confirm the grant duration is one year.

Answer: Yes. 10/1/2016 – 9/30/17

80. Please confirm the document, “GUIDELINES VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT: CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE GRANT” dated 2/2013 is current. If not, please provide location of current document.

Answer: The Policies and Procedures Attachment III to the RFP replaces the MI VOCA Guidelines.

81. Do 5,000 characters include spaces?

Answer: Yes.

82. Is there a required time for implementation once money is received?

Answer: Yes. VOCA Grant projects must be operational within 30 days of the beginning of the project period. If the project has been delayed notice must be provided to the CVSC and if the project is not operational by 90 days the Commission may cancel the project.

83. The grant asks for a CCR number. We do not have a CCR number and cannot get one as the CCR website is no longer available. That site as well as numerous others migrated to SAM.gov in July 2012 and we did not have a CCR number before that time. I have web chatted with the Federal Service Desk about this and was told that there is not a way to get a CCR number if we did not have one before the migration and was referred back to the grant funding source.

Answer: SAM has replaced the CCR. Registration in SAM replaces the RFP requirement for CCR registration. Applicants that obtained CCR numbers prior to the migration of these systems do not need to re-register. Any applicant without a CCR number must register in SAM to meet the requirements of the RFP.

84. If the pending federal rules/regulations are changed to expand the definition of permissible legal assistance, will grantees be permitted to prospectively modify their activities and work plans based on the new rules?

Answer: If the federal rules/regulations change occurs prior to the execution of the 2016-2017 VOCA Grant agreement, the CVSC will make every effort to allow grantees to modify the 2016-2017 proposal to incorporate any new service expansion allowed under the new federal rules/regulations.

85. The RFP states on page 9 that only limited amount of subcontracting may be included and detailed budgets for all subcontractors receiving \$25,000 or more are required. Are sub-grants for direct services to victims permissible? In what circumstances are subcontracts permissible?

Answer: Yes. The circumstances typically permitted for sub-contracting are described in the "Contracts" section on page 24 of the Policies and Procedures.

86. Rather than the five regional legal aid programs submitting multiple competing applications to serve victims of crime, we were considering submitting a statewide application for civil legal assistance for victims that would include subgrants or subcontracts to other legal aid providers. The applicant agency would provide direct services to victims and subcontract or sub-grant with the 4 partner agencies to provide direct services in other geographic regions. This model would provide a coordinated statewide program with staff in multiple cities across the state. Is this permissible?

Answer: No. The Commission requires a direct funding relationship with VOCA Grantees providing services in Michigan.

87. Training is discussed as a permissible activity on page 5 of the Policies and Procedures Manual. Are we permitted to subcontract with or include funding for another entity to provide training to our VOCA funded staff?

Answer: It is permissible to request training to be provided through a subcontract. The proposal must be specific about the purpose and scope of training.